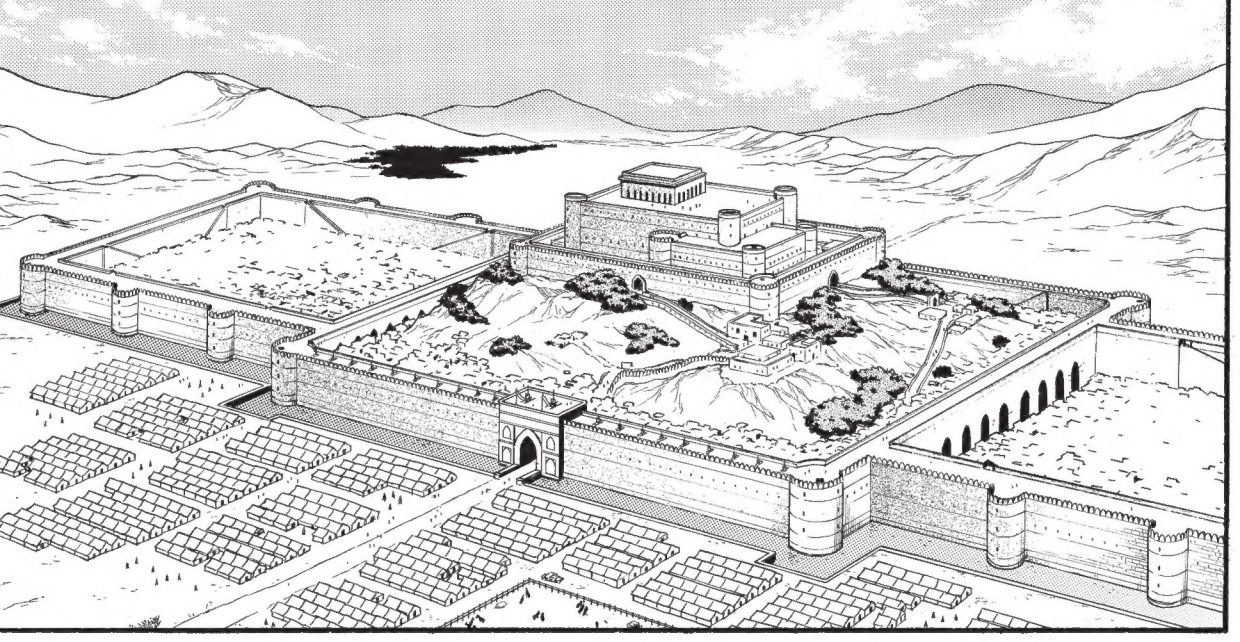
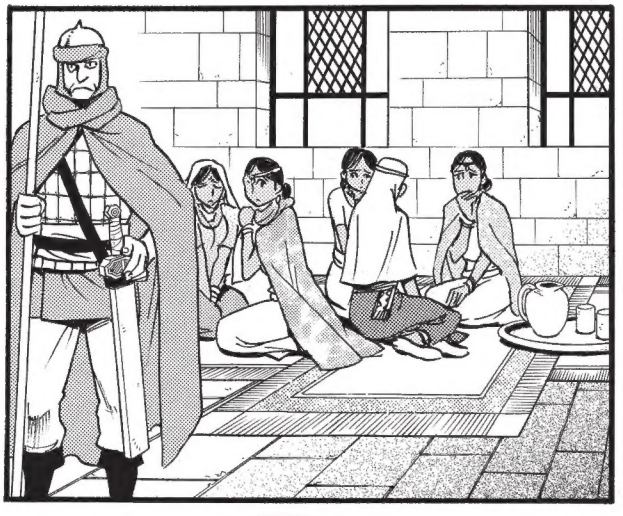
THE HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN

KC
KODANSHA COMICS

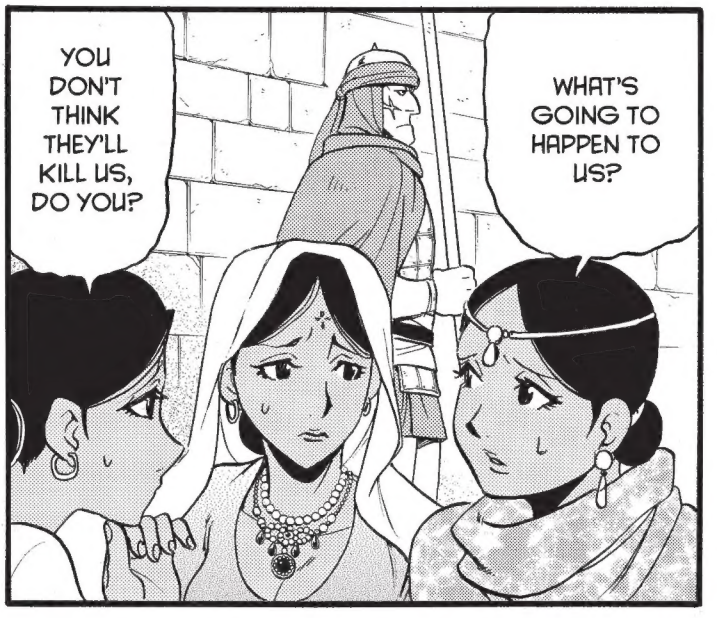
CHAPTER 46

YOSHIKI TANAKA
HIROMU ARAKAWA



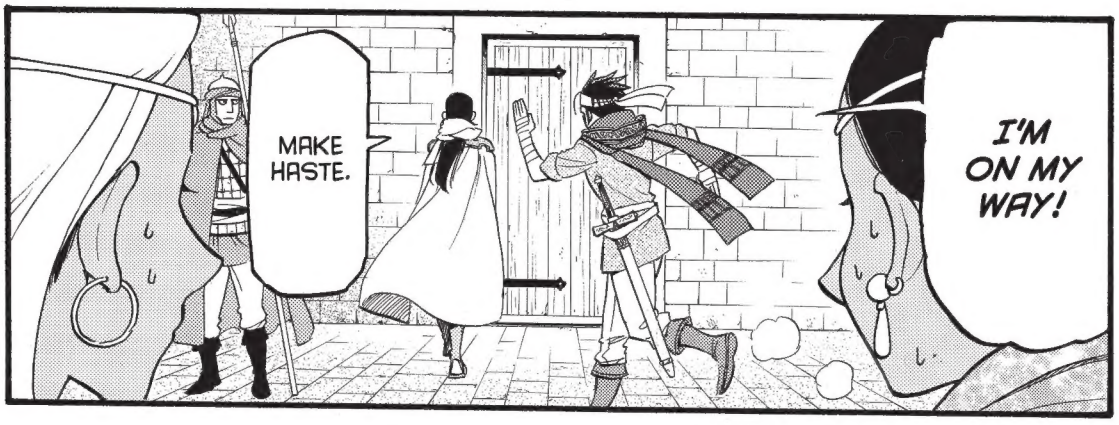


WHY HELLO, MY LOVELY GODDESSES!
WHY ARE YOUR FACES SO CLOUDED WITH SORROW ?

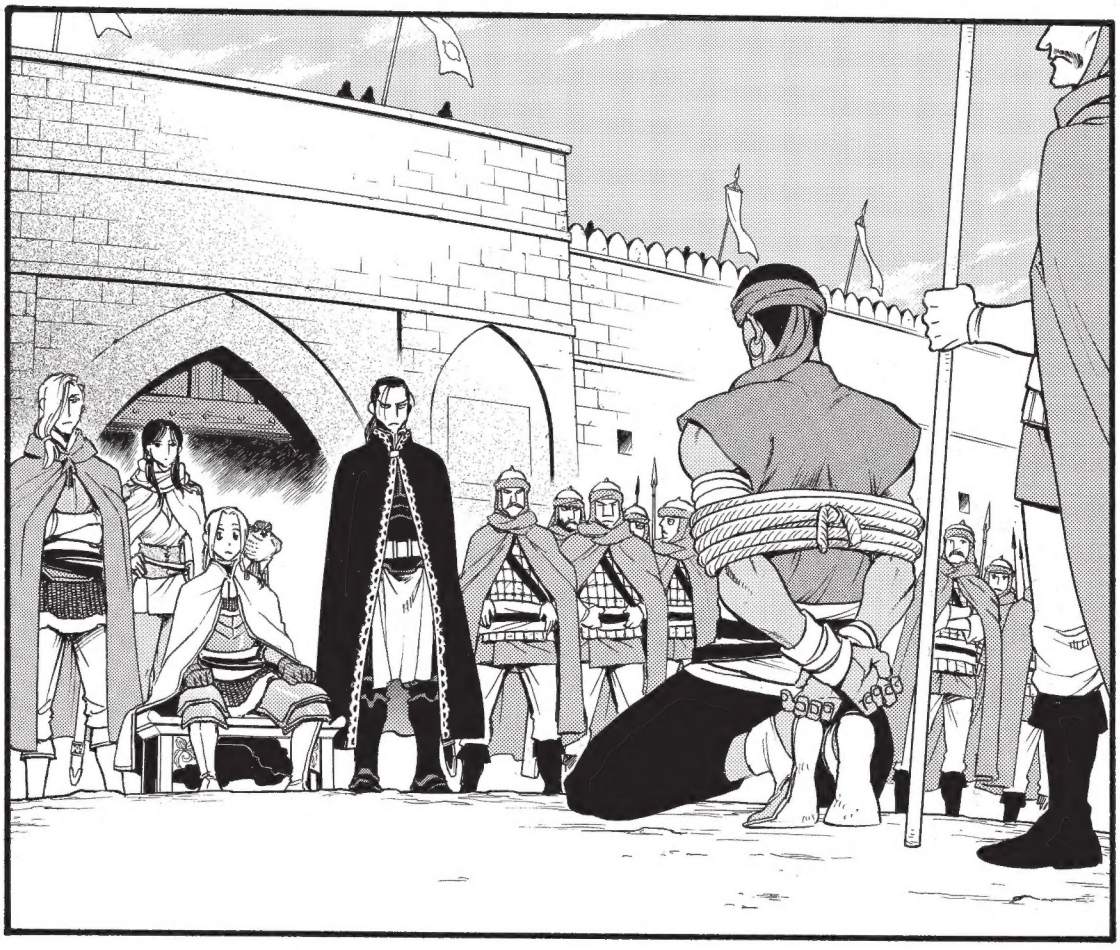

YOU DON'T THINK THEY'LL KILL US, DO YOU?
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US?

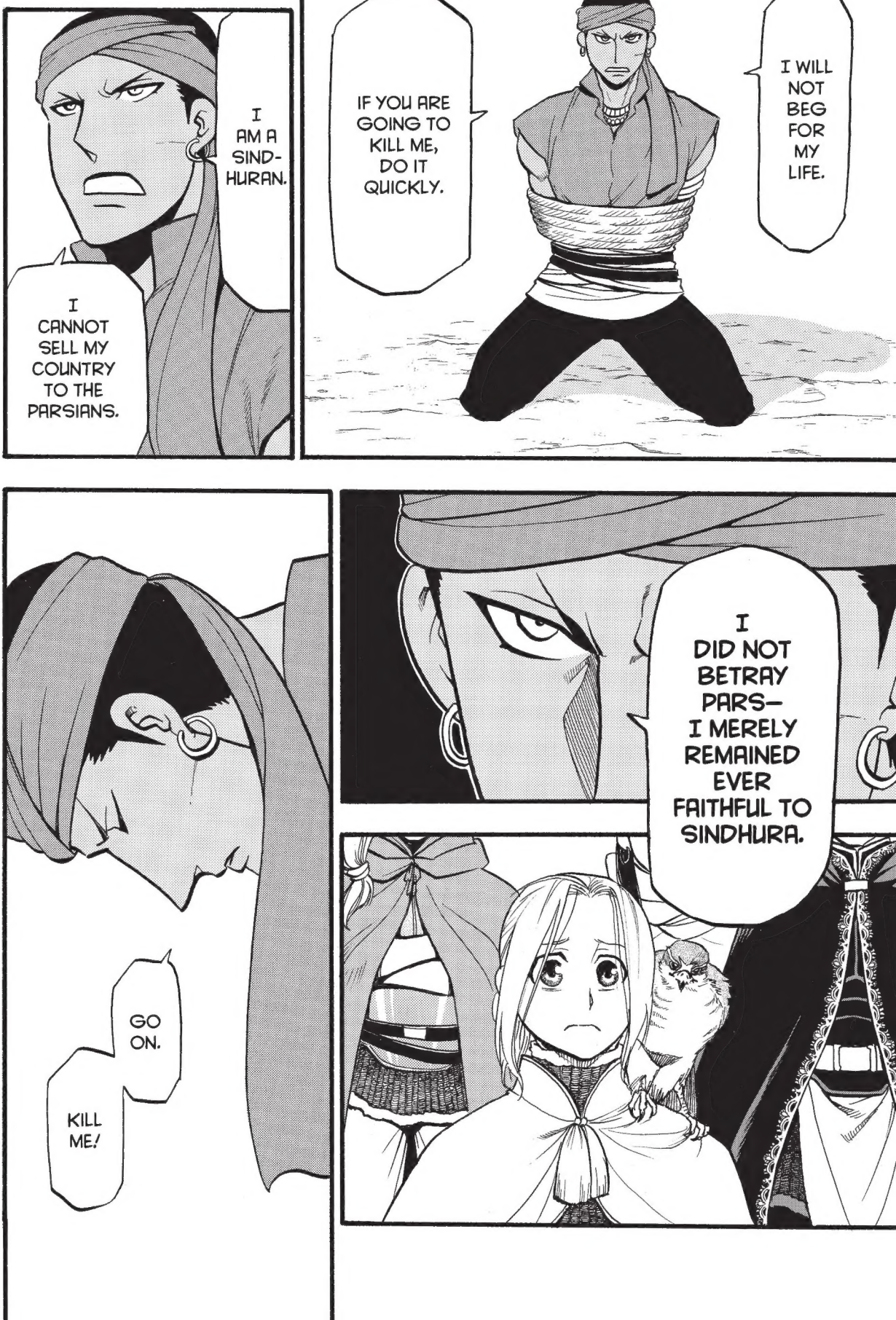
HI!
SIR GIEVE !!
YOU'RE TER-RIBLE !!
HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN?!
"HOW" ...?
I TOLD YOU I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU, DIDN'T I?
BUT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.
HIS HIGHNESS LORD ARSLAN IS A MERCIFUL RULER. HE WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING TO HARM YOU.
NO, EVEN IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT HE DOES TRY SOMETHING, I, GIEVE, WOULD DEFY HIS ORDERS IF NECESSARY TO...
ANYWAY, REST ASSURED I WILL BE FOREVER BY YOUR SIDE!!
HIS HIGHNESS IS CALLING.

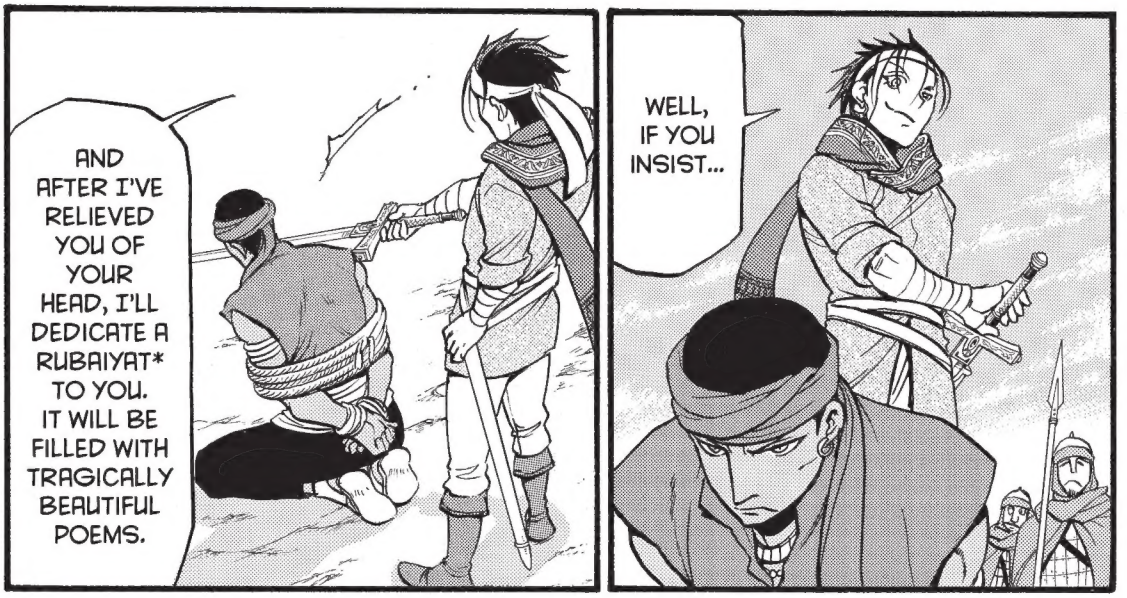
Chapter 46: The Bond of Servant and Master



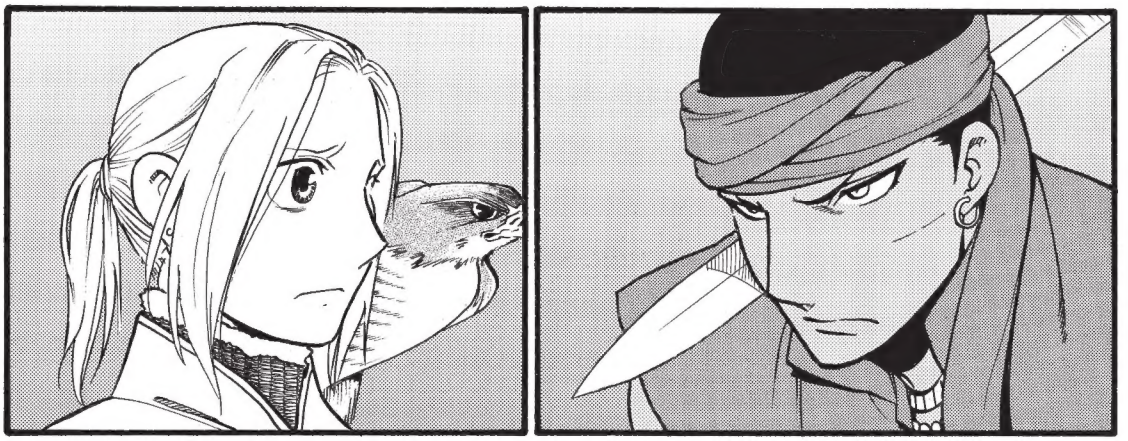
THE HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN

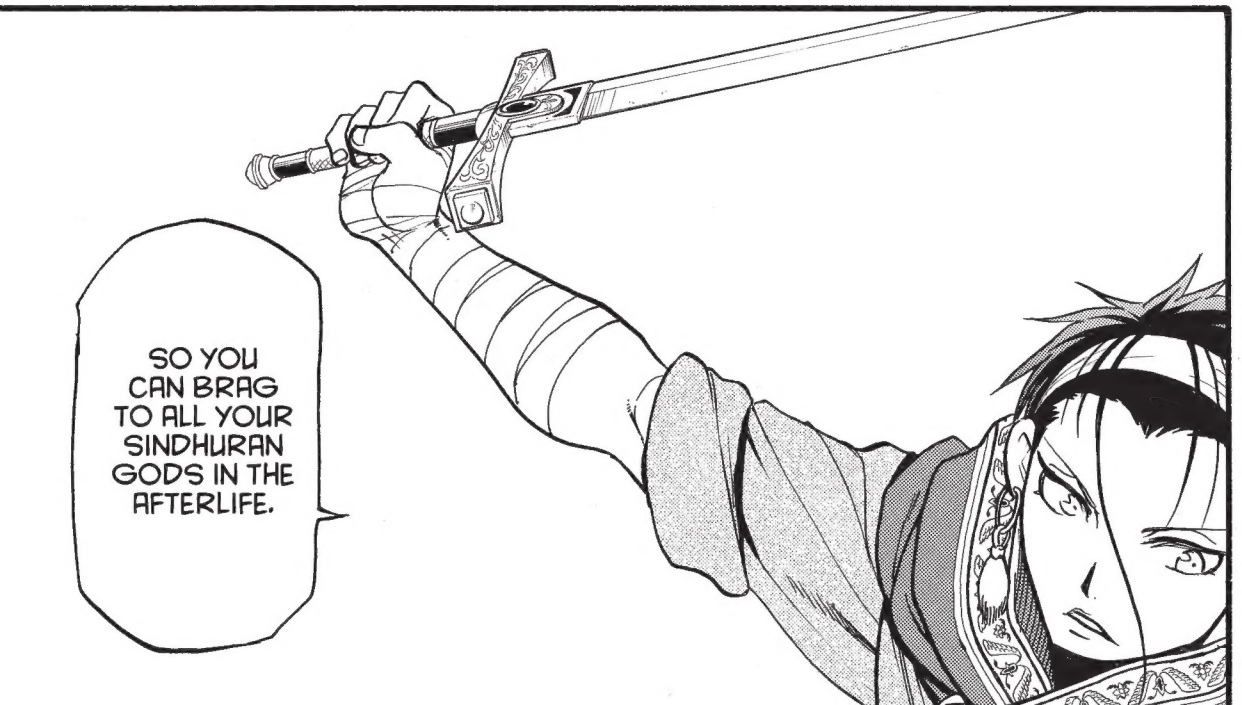



I AM A SIND-HURAN.
I CANNOT SELL MY COUNTRY TO THE PARSIANS.
IF YOU ARE GOING TO KILL ME, DO IT QUICKLY.
I WILL NOT BEG FOR MY LIFE.
I DID NOT BETRAY PARS— I MERELY REMAINED EVER FAITHFUL TO SINDHURA.
GO ON.
KILL ME!

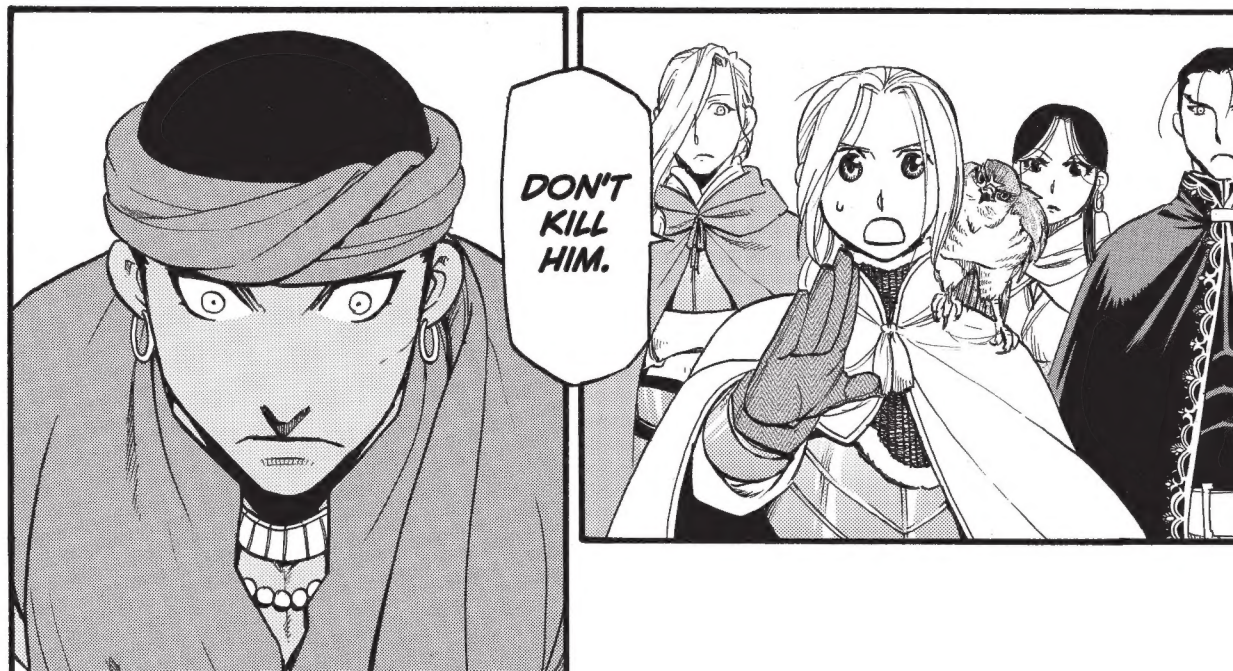

AND AFTER I'VE RELIEVED YOU OF YOUR HEAD, I'LL DEDICATE A RUBAIYAT* TO YOU. IT WILL BE FILLED WITH TRAGICALLY BEAUTIFUL POEMS.
WELL, IF YOU INSIST...

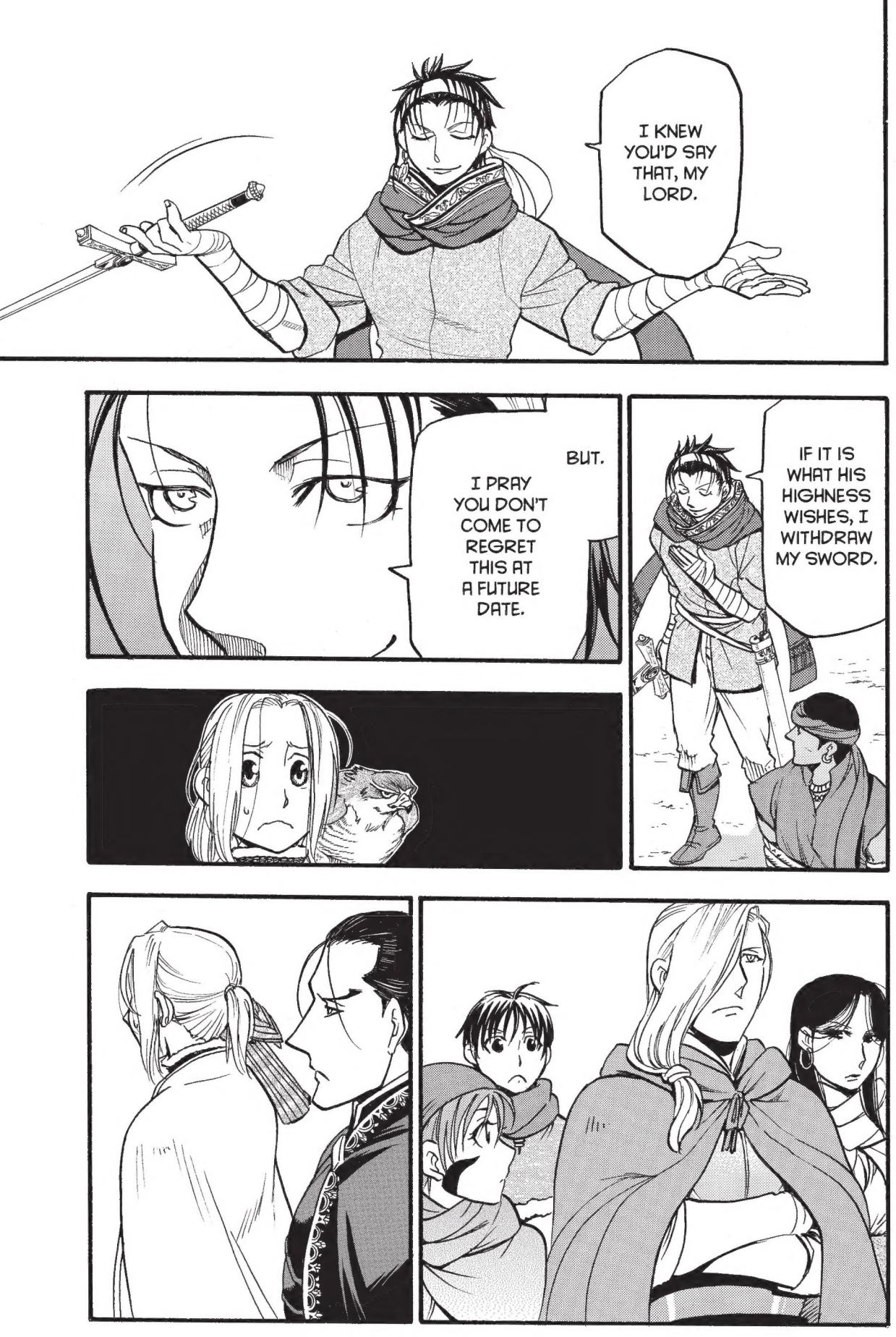
A collection of four-line poems

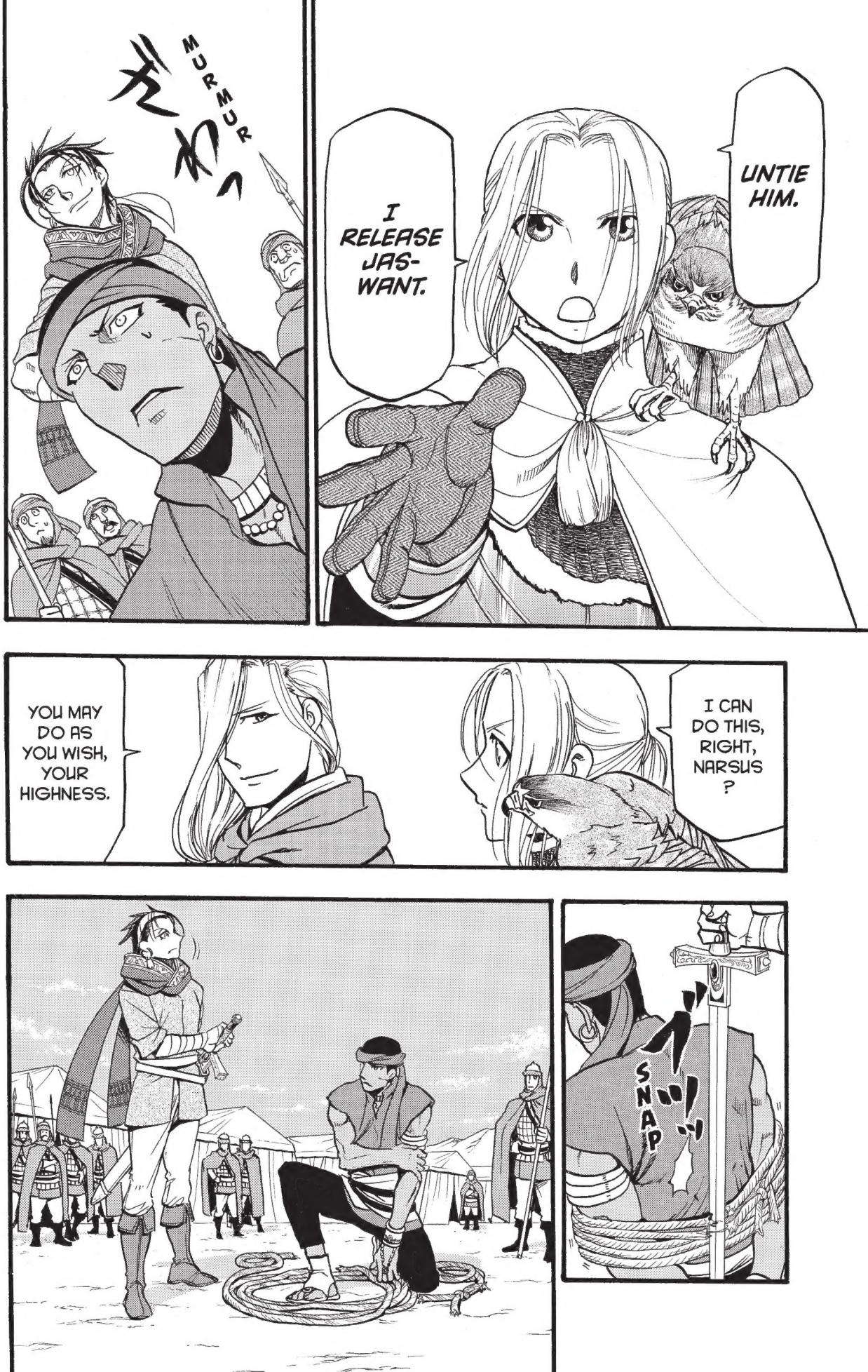




NO, GIEVE! STOP !!

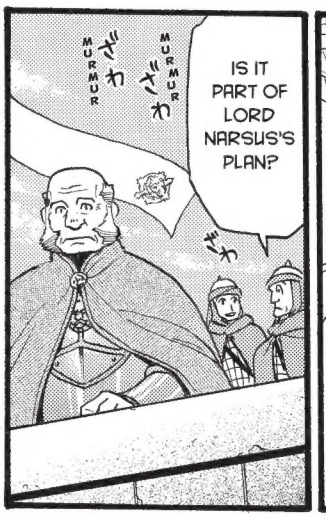

DON'T KILL HIM.


I KNEW YOU'D SAY THAT, MY LORD.
IF IT IS WHAT HIS HIGHNESS WISHES, I WITHDRAW MY SWORD.
BUT.
I PRAY YOU DON'T COME TO REGRET THIS AT A FUTURE DATE.


MURMUR
ざわ
UNTIE HIM.
I RELEASE JAS-WANT.
I CAN DO THIS, RIGHT, NARSUS?
YOU MAY DO AS YOU WISH, YOUR HIGHNESS.
SNAP!

ZSH

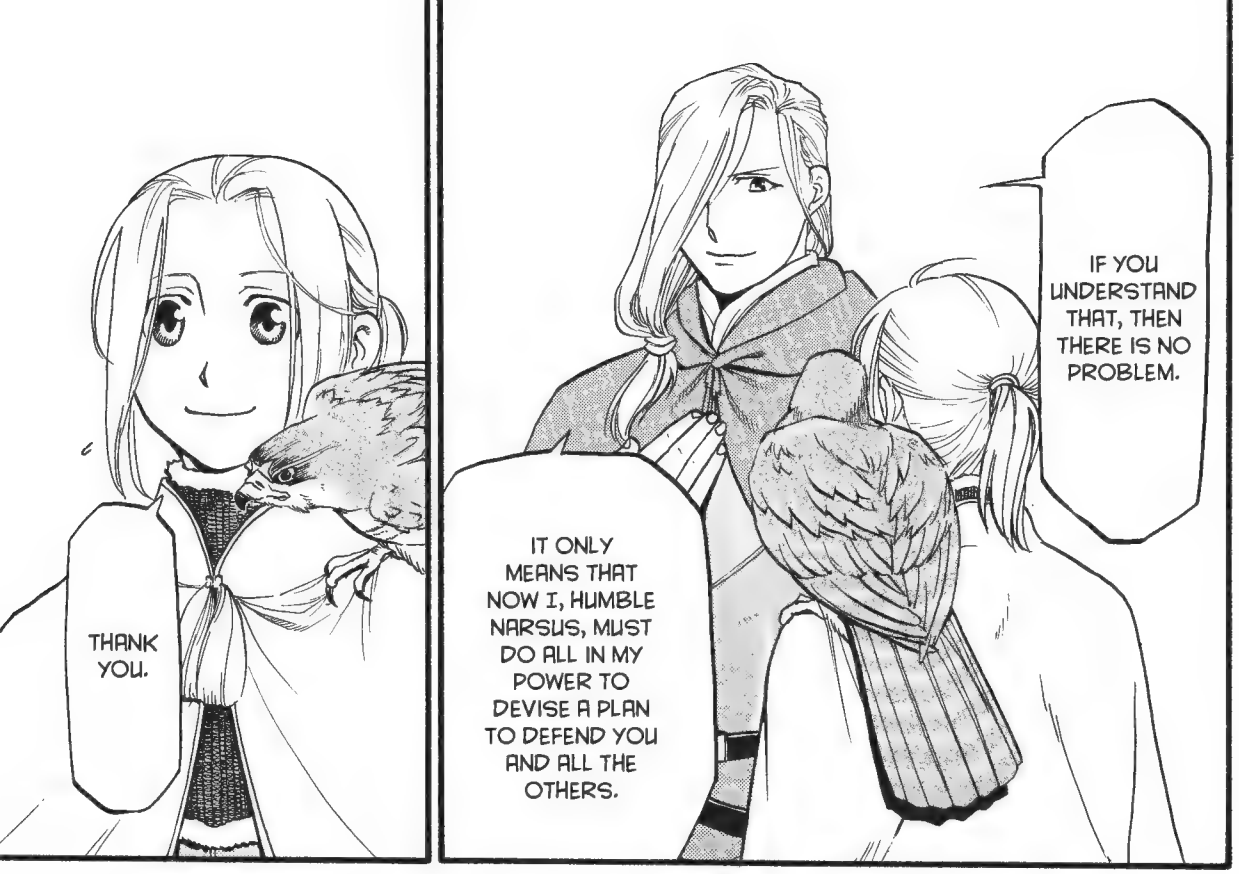
DID YOU TELL HIM TO DO THAT?
NO, I SAID NOTHING TO HIM.


IS IT PART OF LORD NARSUS'S PLAN?
MURMUR
MURMUR

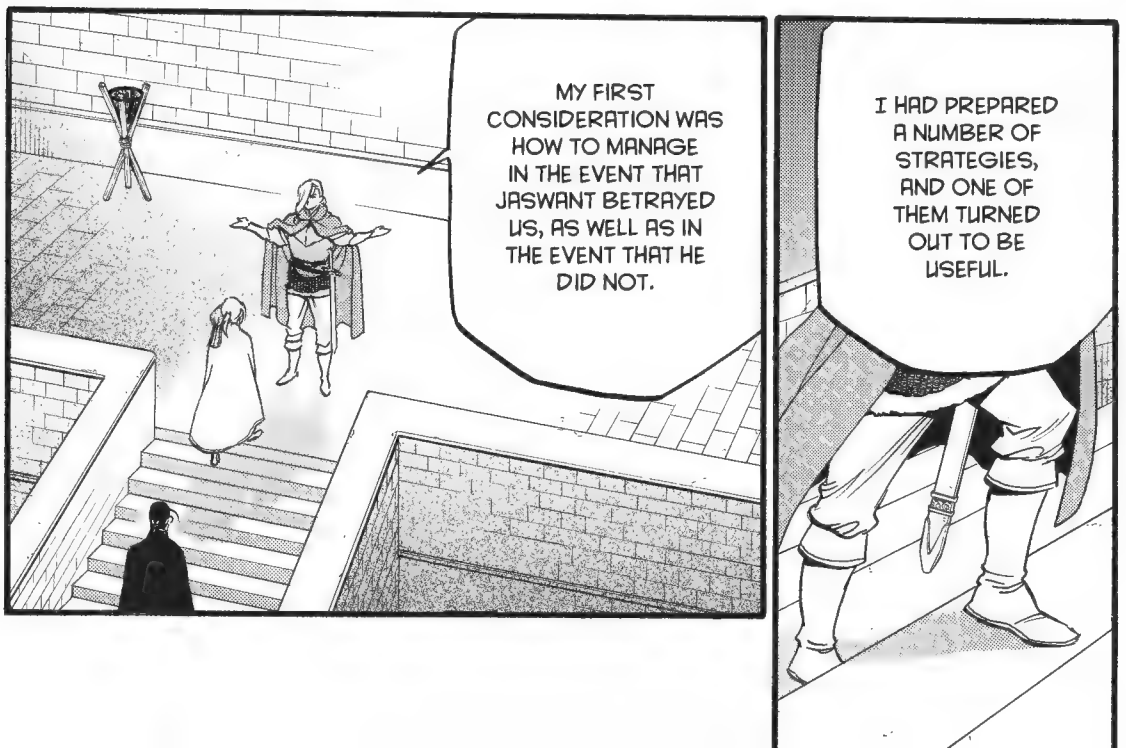
HUH? THEY RELEASED HIM.
CAN WE JUST LET HIM GO?

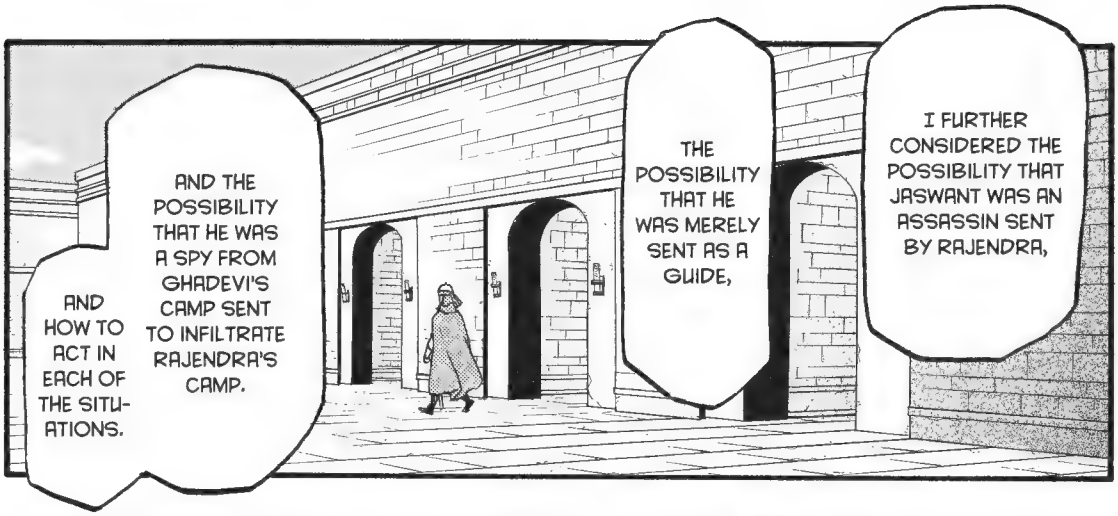
IT IS HIS HIGHNESS'S WILL.

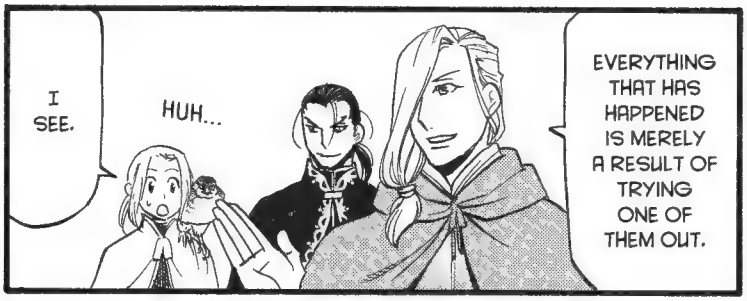
I WONDER IF YOU FULLY COMPREHEND THE WEIGHT OF THIS RESPONSIBILITY.
THANK YOU, NAR-SUS.
BUT WAS THIS REALLY FOR THE BEST?
FRANKLY, I THINK YOU'RE BEING NAÏVE.
...I DO.
I MAY HAVE HELPED JASWANT, BUT HE MAY STILL REPAY MY KINDNESS WITH CRUELTY.
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO MY SOLDIERS, BUT WHAT I'VE DONE MAY BRING DISASTER UPON THEM.

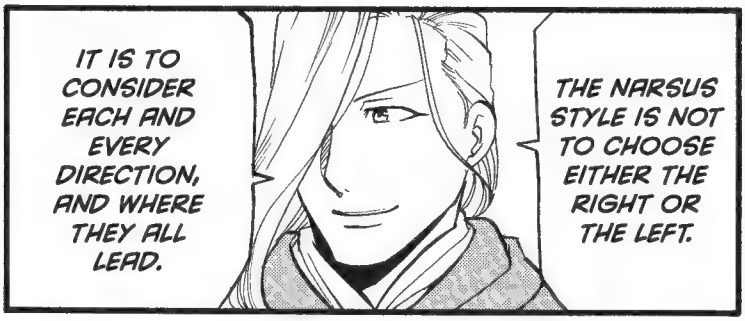

THANK YOU.
IT ONLY MEANS THAT NOW I, HUMBLE NARSUS, MUST DO ALL IN MY POWER TO DEVISE A PLAN TO DEFEND YOU AND ALL THE OTHERS.
IF YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, THEN THERE IS NO PROBLEM.

WELL, I WASN'T ENTIRELY CONFIDENT THAT HE WOULD BETRAY US.
HOW WERE SO SURE THAT JASWANT WOULD BETRAY US, NARSUS?


MY FIRST CONSIDERATION WAS HOW TO MANAGE IN THE EVENT THAT JASWANT BETRAYED US, AS WELL AS IN THE EVENT THAT HE DID NOT.
I HAD PREPARED A NUMBER OF STRATEGIES, AND ONE OF THEM TURNED OUT TO BE USEFUL.

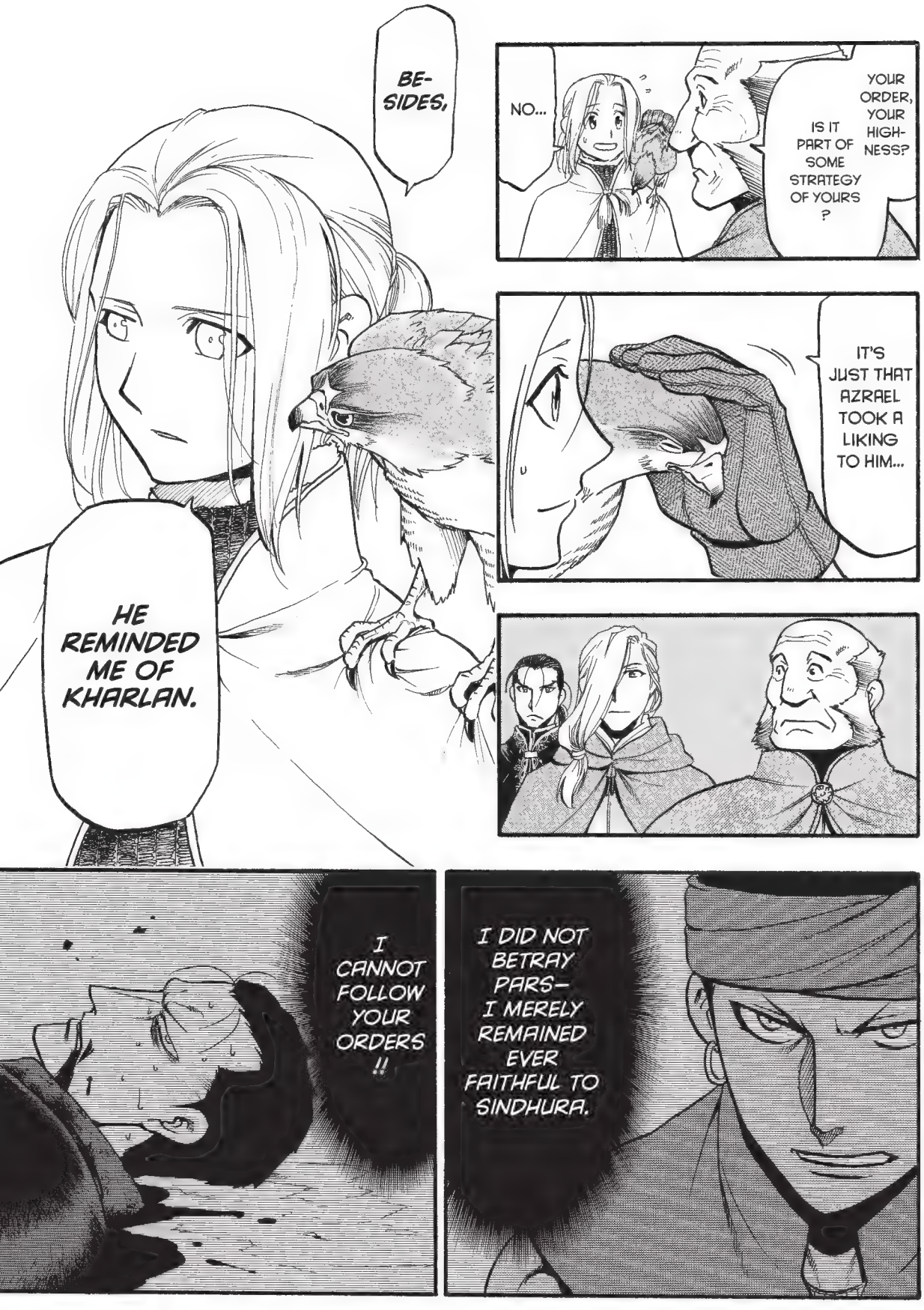

I FURTHER CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY THAT JASWANT WAS AN ASSASSIN SENT BY RAJENDRA,
THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE WAS MERELY SENT AS A GUIDE,
AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE WAS A SPY FROM GHADEVI'S CAMP SENT TO INFILTRATE RAJENDRA'S CAMP.
AND HOW TO ACT IN EACH OF THE SITUATIONS.


EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED IS MERELY A RESULT OF TRYING ONE OF THEM OUT.
HUH...
I SEE.

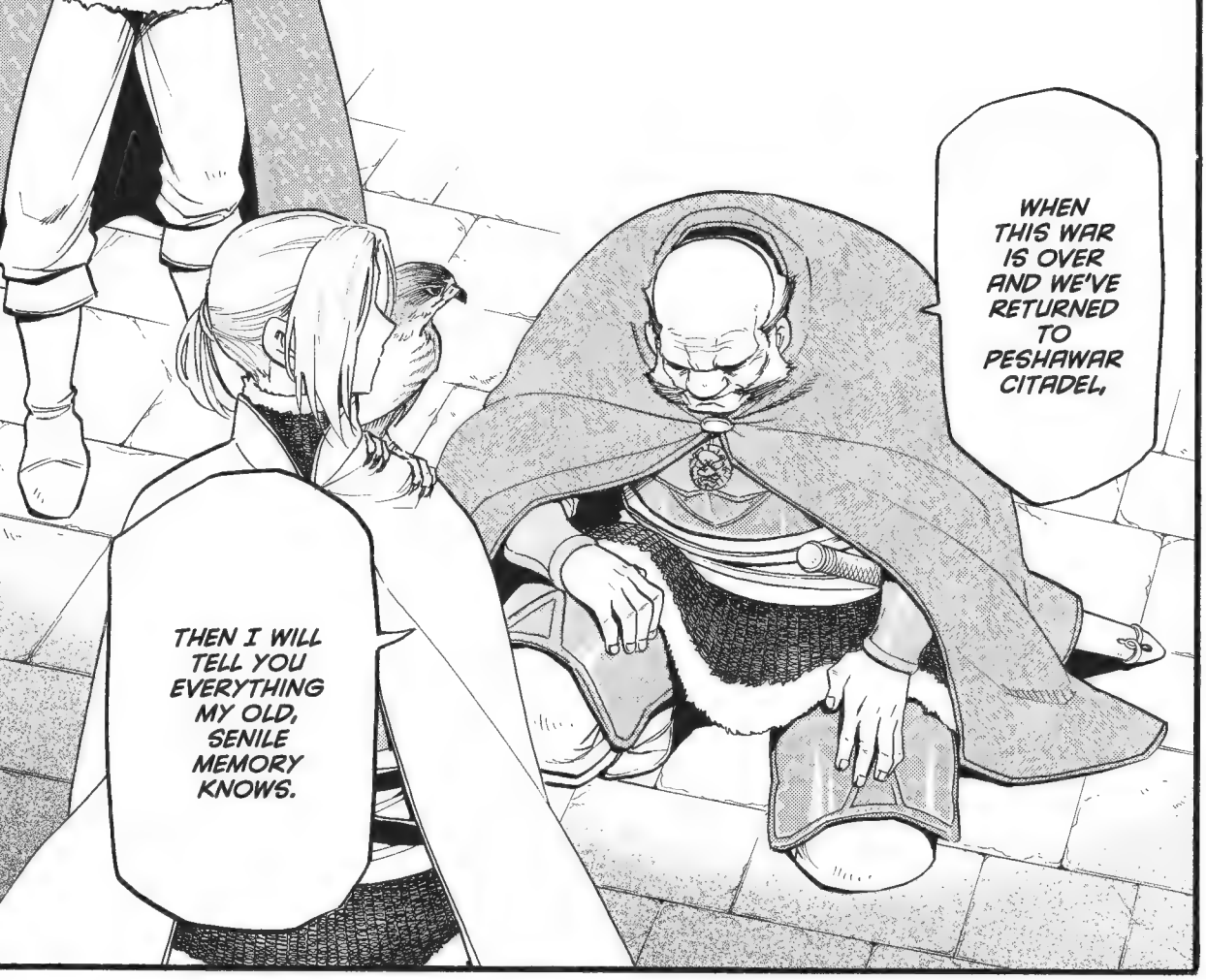

THE NARSUS STYLE IS NOT TO CHOOSE EITHER THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT.
IT IS TO CONSIDER EACH AND EVERY DIRECTION, AND WHERE THEY ALL LEAD.

NARSUS. WAS IT ALL RIGHT TO LET THE SPY GO?
OH.
IT WAS ON MY ORDER THAT HE WAS RELEASED.

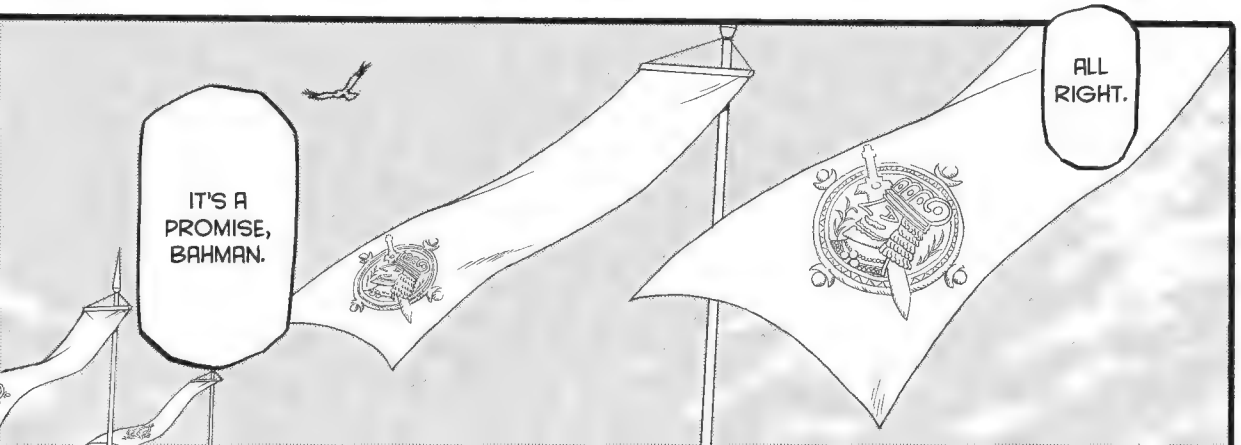
FROM THERE, IF JASWANT WAS A GHADEVI SPY, WHETHER RAJENDRA KNEW ABOUT IT OR NOT WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
SUCH WERE THE VARIOUS SCENARIOS I IMAGINED, AND I DEVISED A SUITABLE PLAN FOR EACH OF THEM.

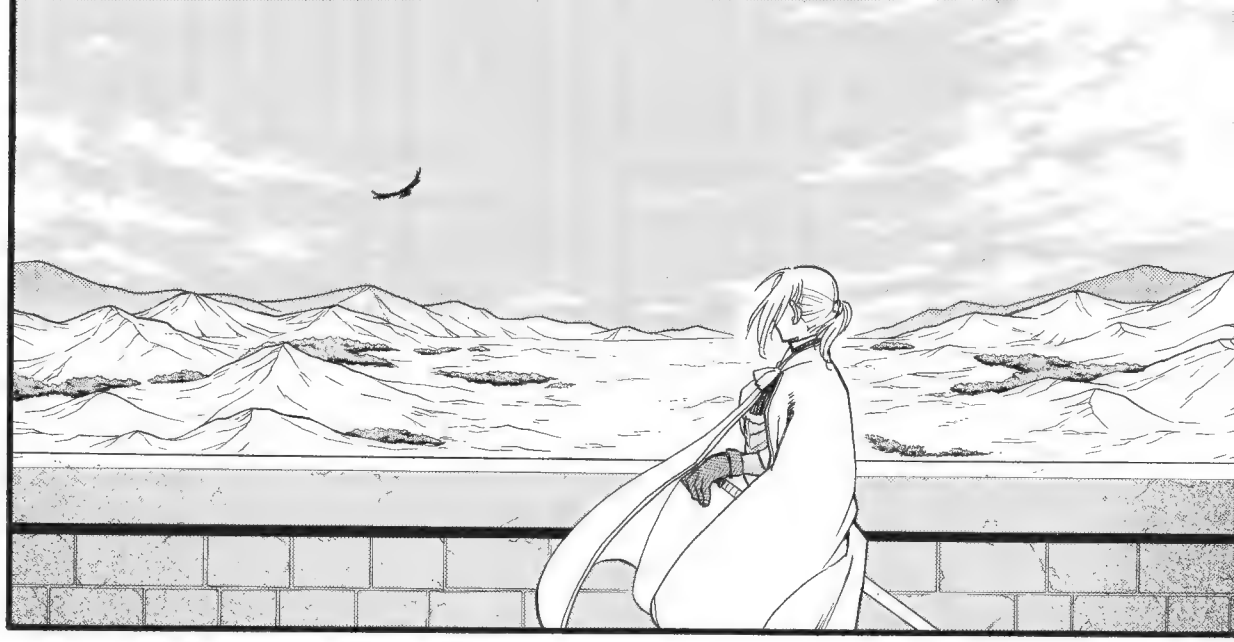

BE-
SIDES,
HE REMINDED ME OF KHARLAN.
NO...
YOUR ORDER, YOUR HIGH-NESS?
IS IT PART OF SOME STRATEGY OF YOURS ?
IT'S JUST THAT AZRAEL TOOK A LIKING TO HIM...
I CANNOT FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS !!
I DID NOT BETRAY PARS— I MERELY REMAINED EVER FAITHFUL TO SINDHURA.

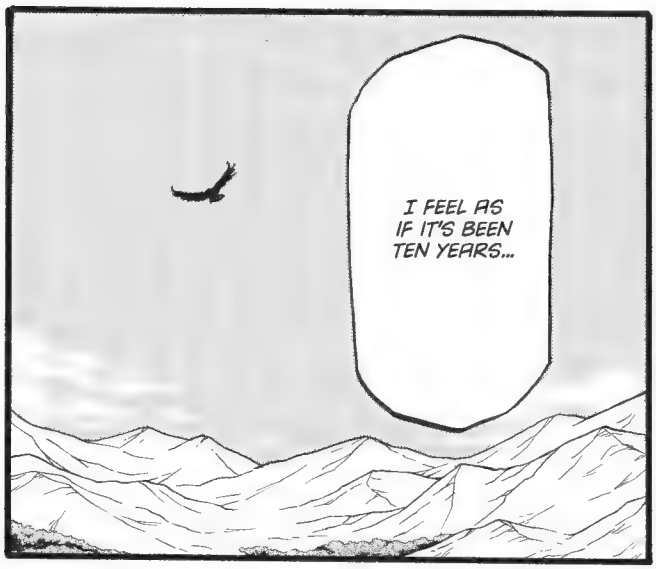
I BELIEVE THEY MUST HAVE HAD A REASON TO ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH A TRAITOR.
NOW THAT I CAN THINK ABOUT IT RATIONALLY, I CAN FEEL HIS SINCERITY AND SADNESS IN THOSE WORDS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS THAT KHARLAN HAD SWORN ALLEGIANCE TO, BUT HE CALLED ME THE PITIFUL PRINCE, AND HE ADMITTED THAT I HADN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG WHEN HE CAME TO KILL ME.
I FELT SOMETHING OF THAT IN JASWANT, AS WELL.
...
...YOUR HIGH-NESS.

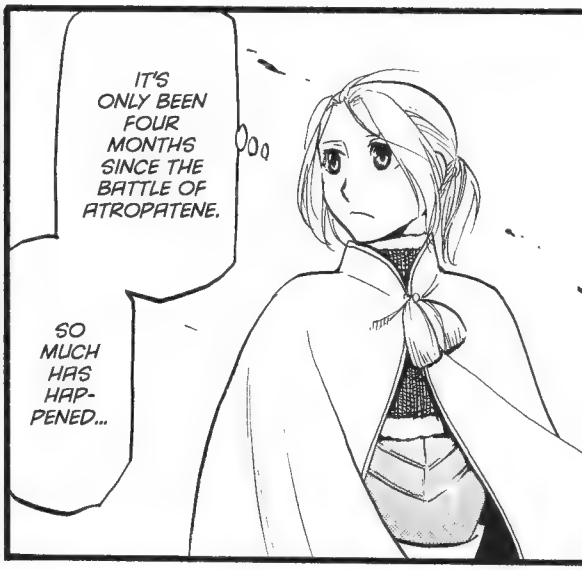

WHEN THIS WAR IS OVER AND WE'VE RETURNED TO PESHAWAR CITADEL,
THEN I WILL TELL YOU EVERYTHING MY OLD, SENILE MEMORY KNOWS.

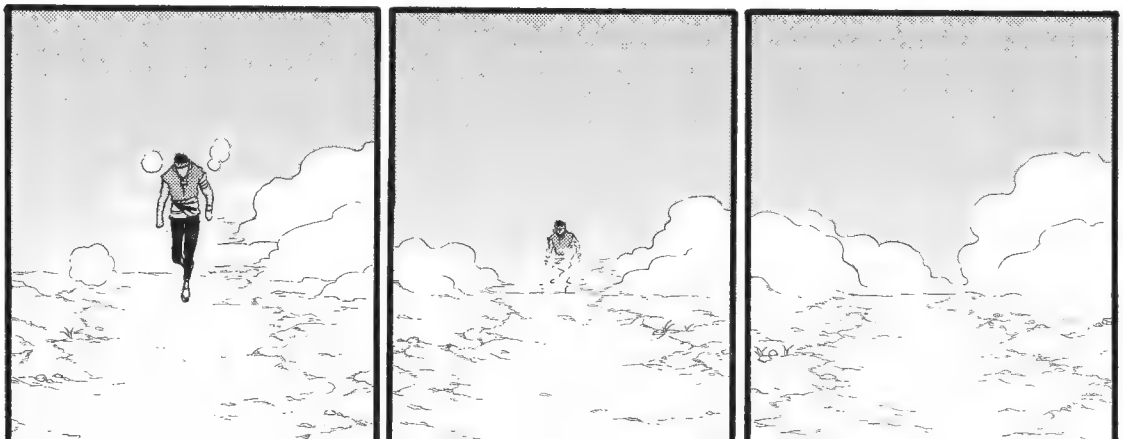
PLEASE WAIT UNTIL THEN.
PLEASE ...


ALL RIGHT.
IT'S A PROMISE, BAHMAN.

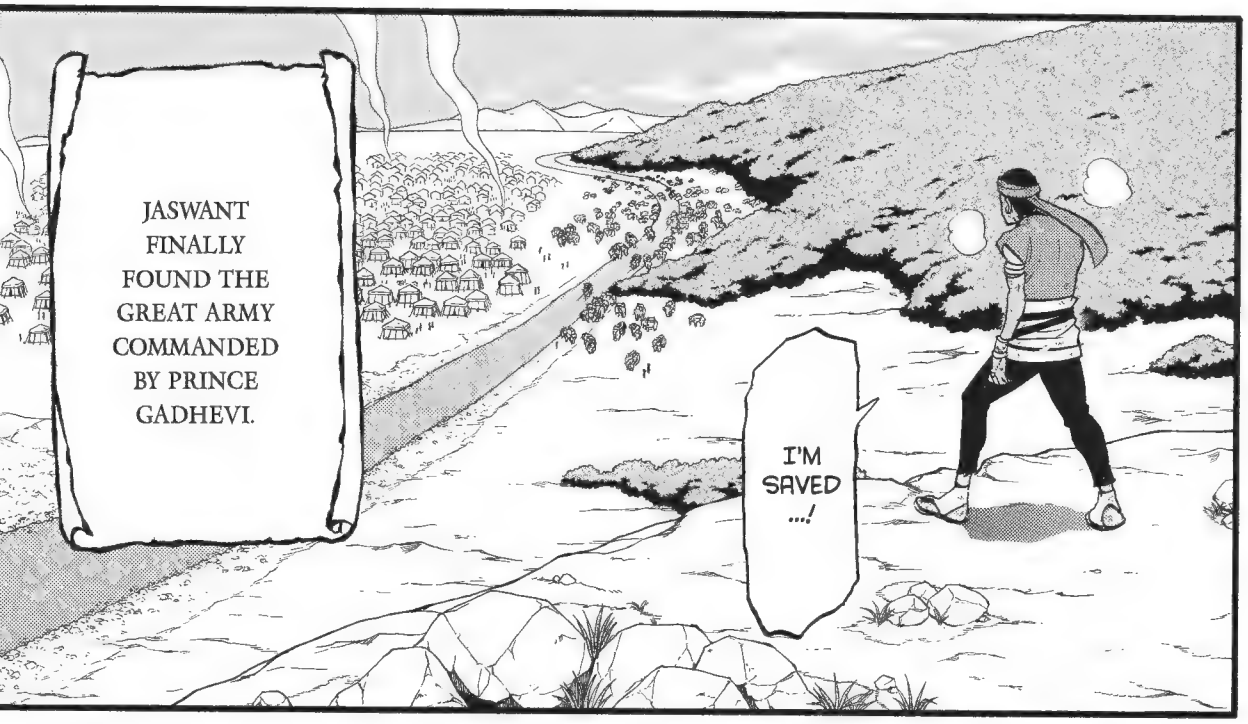



I FEEL AS IF IT'S BEEN TEN YEARS...


IT'S ONLY BEEN FOUR MONTHS SINCE THE BATTLE OF ATROPATENE.
SO MUCH HAS HAP-PENED...



AFTER THREE DAYS OF TRAVERSING THE WILDERNESS ON FOOT.

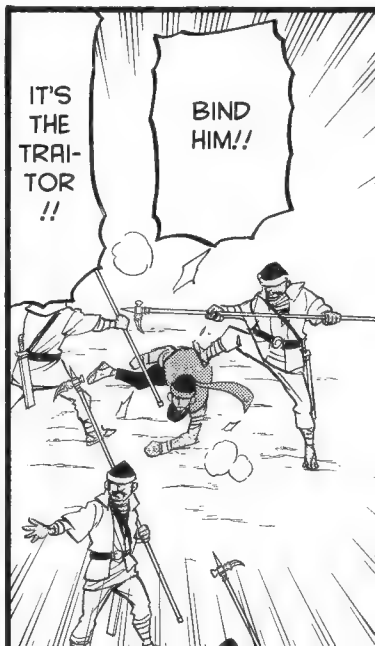

JASWANT FINALLY FOUND THE GREAT ARMY COMMANDED BY PRINCE GADHEVI.
I'M SAVED ...!

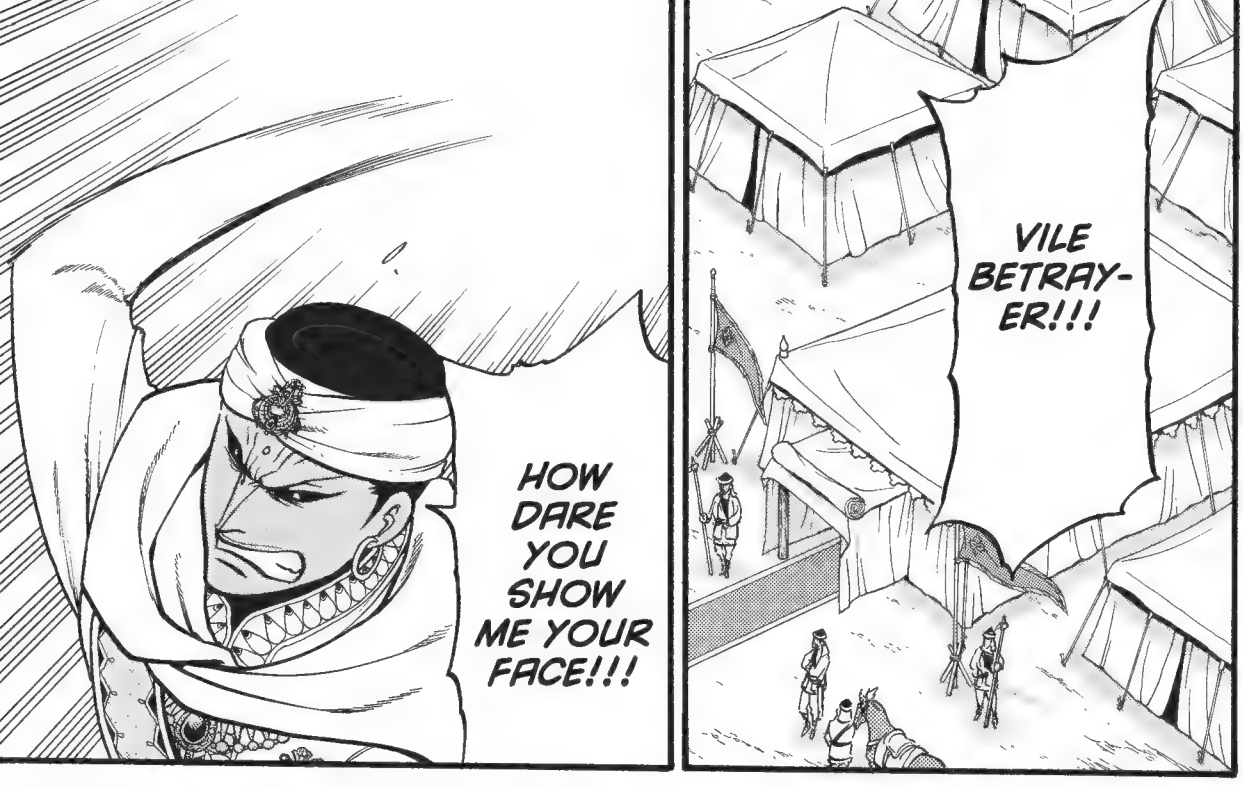
?!
WHO GOES THERE ?!
I SEE THAT YOU ARE THE ARMY OF HIS HIGHNESS LORD GADHEVI.

PLEASE GRANT ME AN AUDIENCE WITH...
I HAD BEEN INFILTRATING RAJENDRA'S CAMP BY THE ORDER OF SIR MAHENDRA.
MY NAME IS JAS-WANT.

WHAM

SIR MAHEN-DRA !!
PLEASE, CALL SIR MAHEN-DRA!!
PLEASE, WAIT! I'M ON YOUR SIDE!!
I DID NOT BETRAY YOU!!


IT'S THE TRAI-TOR !!
BIND HIM!!


HOW DARE YOU SHOW ME YOUR FACE!!!
VILE BETRAY-ER!!!

YOUR HIGH-NESS!! WHY DO YOU TREAT ME LIKE THIS?!
I HAVE BEEN NOTHING BUT LOYAL TO YOU!!
SILENCE! SILENCE !!
YOU CONSPIRED WITH THE PARSIAN ARMY AND OPENED UP GUJARAT STRONG-HOLD TO THEM!!

WHAM

I SWEAR, I NEVER CONSPIRED WITH THEM!
I...I AM SHAMED TO ADMIT IT, BUT THE PARSIANS HAD FOOLED ME, AS WELL!
I HAVE SEVERAL WITNESSES!
YOU FEIGNED LOYALTY AND LURED GOVIND AND TARA OUTSIDE THE STRONGHOLD!

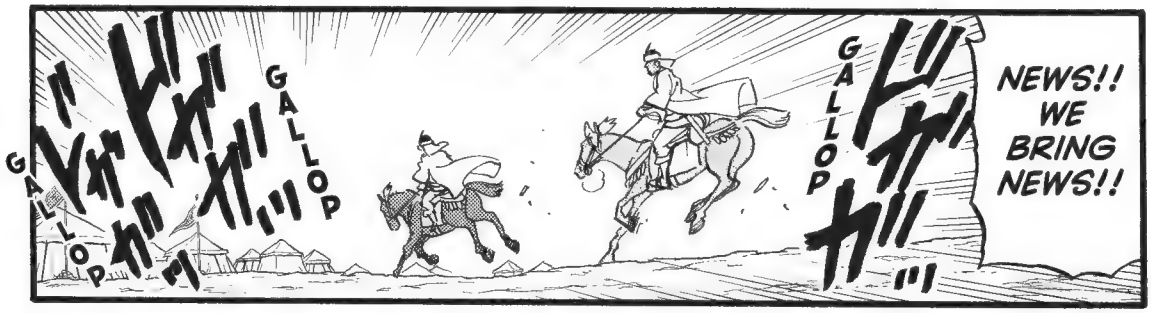
I WOULD BE CELEBRATING MY VICTORY AT THE PARSIAN CAMP!!
IF I HAD BEEN IN LEAGUE WITH THEM, I WOULD NEVER HAD RETURNED TO YOUR HONORABLE PRESENCE!!

I BELIEVE IT WAS THAT SINCERITY THAT LED TO HIS OVEREAGERNESS TO PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS.
I WILL VOUCH FOR HIS LOYALTY AND SINCERITY.

YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY, YOUR HIGHNESS, BUT HE HAS SWORN FEALTY TO OUR FAMILY.
HRNGH...

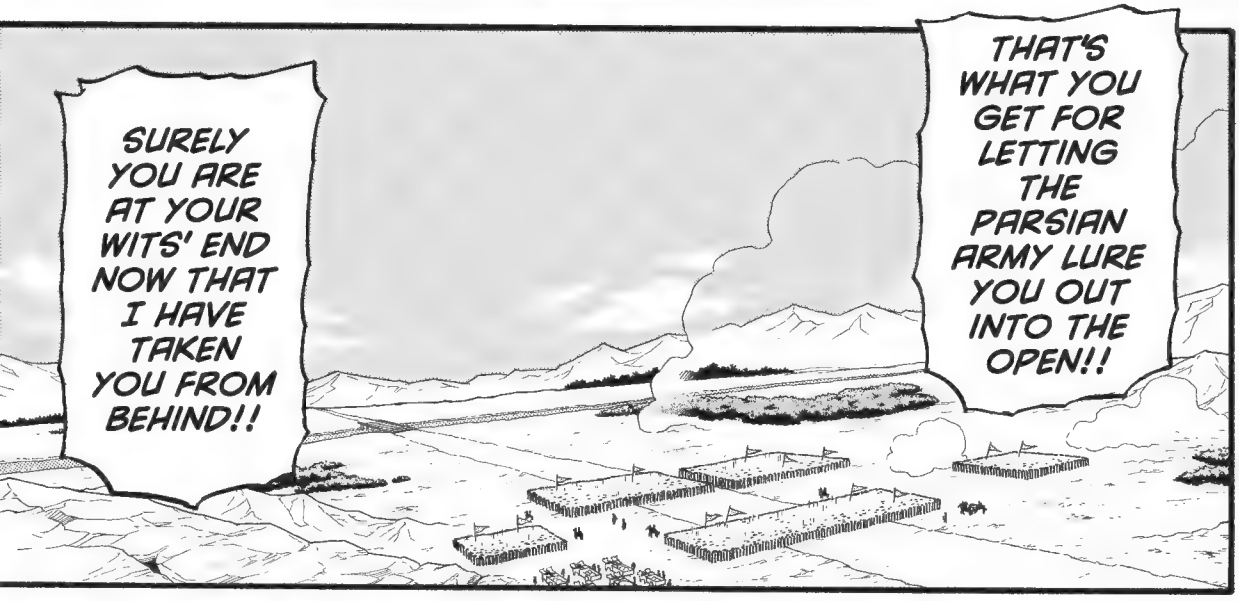
HE HAS BEEN WORKING IN THE SHADOWS FOR THE BENEFIT OF YOUR HIGHNESS.
PLEASE... PLEASE FORGIVE HIM!!
...VERY WELL.
FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S SAKE, I FORGIVE YOU, THIS TIME.
I WILL LEAVE YOUR HEAD ATTACHED TO YOUR BODY FOR NOW!
HOWEVER, IF YOUR BEHAVIOR GIVES ME THE SLIGHTEST REASON TO DOUBT YOU, YOU KNOW THE CONSE-QUENCES!

...YES, YOUR HIGH-NESS!!


GALLOP
GALLOP
GALLOP
GALLOP
NEWS!! WE BRING NEWS!!

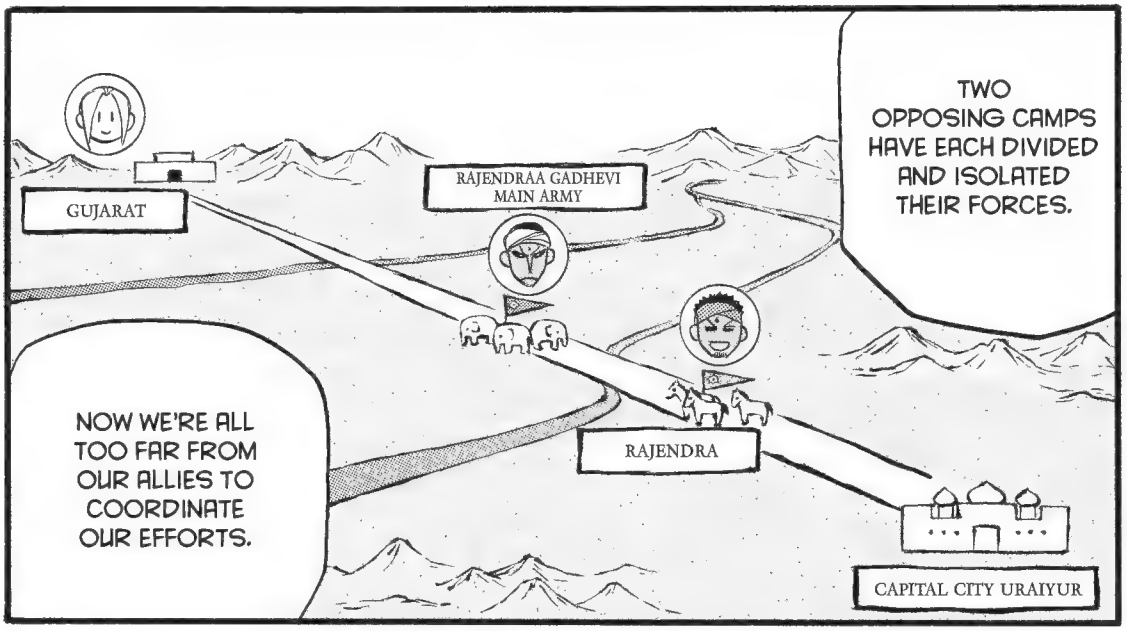
RAJEN-DRA'S ARMY HAS SET UP CAMP...
...TO OUR REAR. THEY ARE ON THE HIGHWAY BETWEEN OUR ARMY AND URAIYUR!!
WHAT?!

HAAA, HA, HA, HA, HA !!!
TAKE THAT, GAD-HEVI !!!

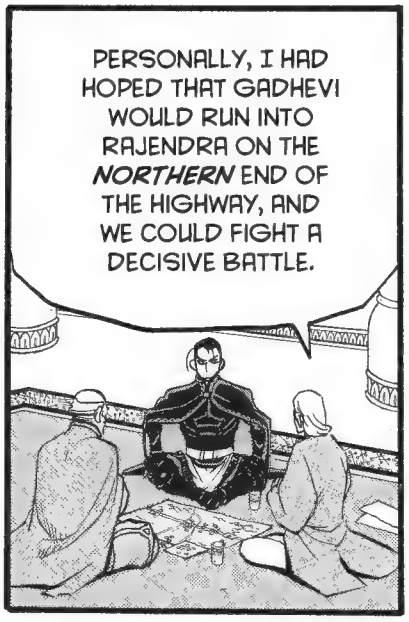

THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR LETTING THE PARSIAN ARMY LURE YOU OUT INTO THE OPEN!!
SURELY YOU ARE AT YOUR WITS' END NOW THAT I HAVE TAKEN YOU FROM BEHIND!!

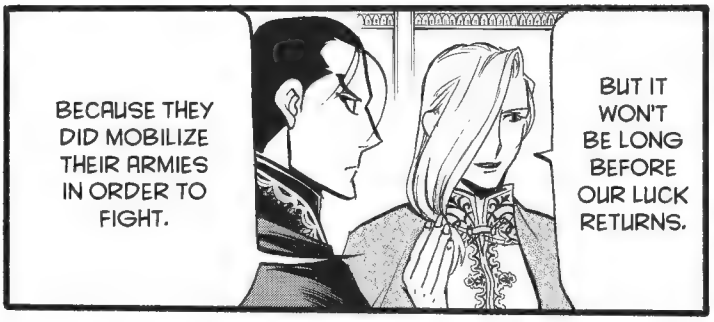
THE SITUATION HAS TAKEN A TURN FOR THE RIDICU-LOUS.

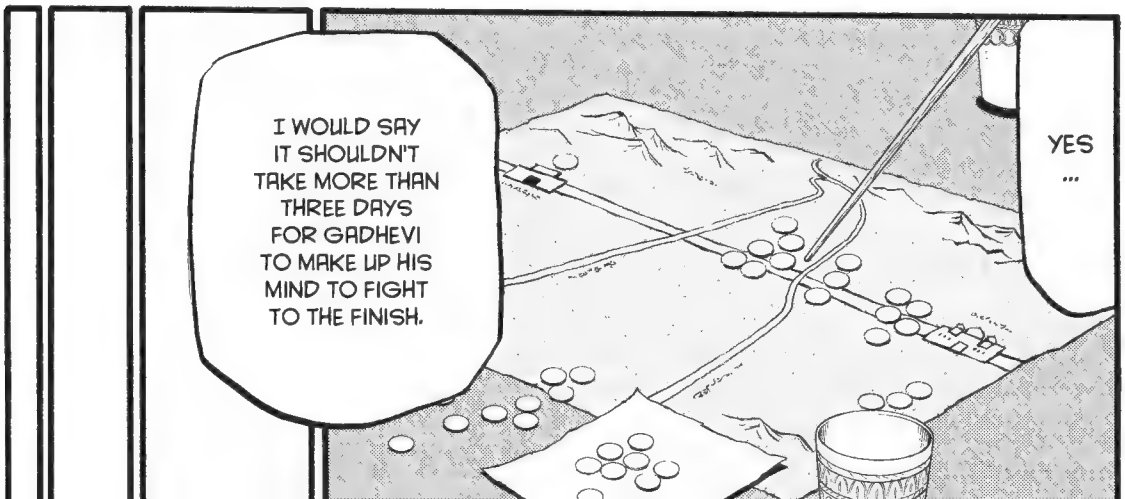
わはははは
WA HA HA HA HA HA
THE UPPER HAND IS OURS!
OUR KING!
WELL DONE, YOUR HIGH-NESS LORD RAJEN-DRA !!

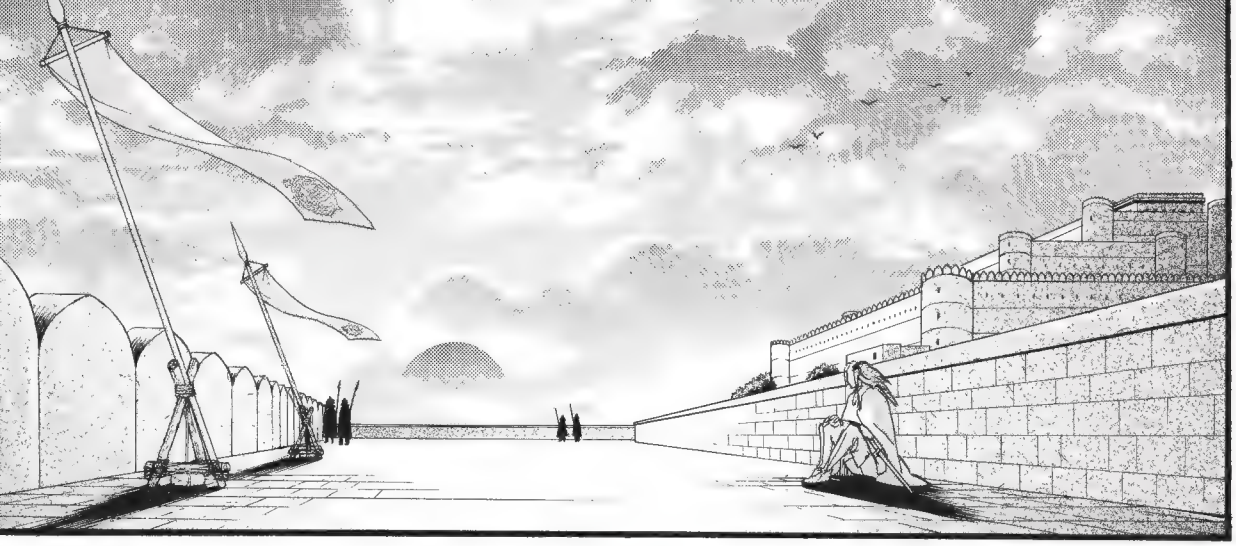

GUJARAT
RAJENDRAA GADHEVI
MAIN ARMY
RAJENDRA
CAPITAL CITY URAIYUR
TWO OPPOSING CAMPS HAVE EACH DIVIDED AND ISOLATED THEIR FORCES.
NOW WE'RE ALL TOO FAR FROM OUR ALLIES TO COORDINATE OUR EFFORTS.

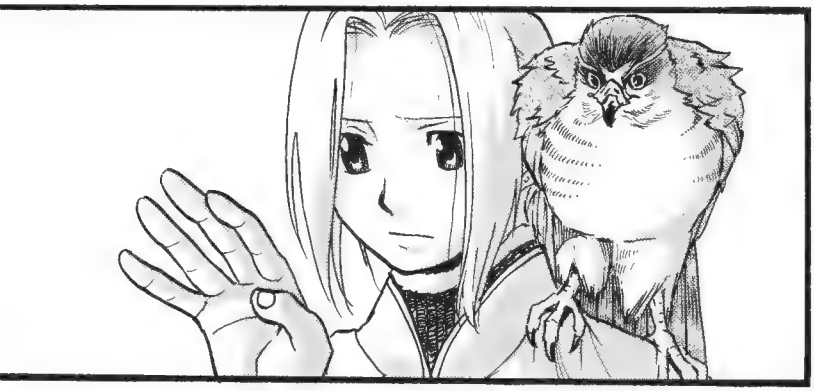
YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT.
IT SEEMS WE PUSHED OUR LUCK A LITTLE TOO FAR.

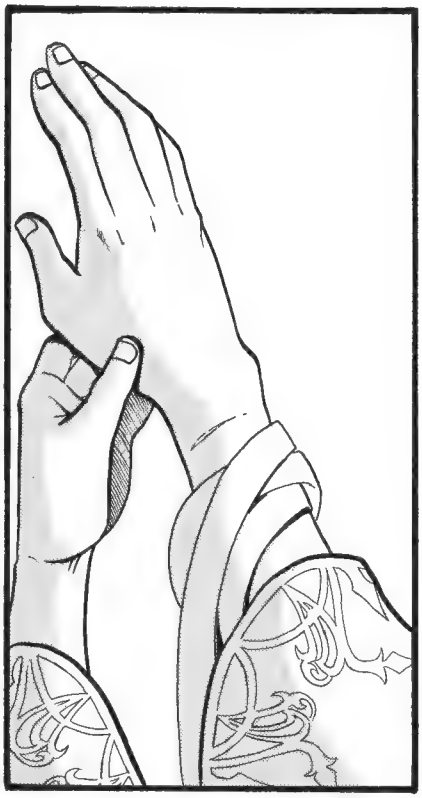

PERSONALLY, I HAD HOPED THAT GADHEVI WOULD RUN INTO RAJENDRA ON THE *NORTHERN* END OF THE HIGHWAY, AND WE COULD FIGHT A DECISIVE BATTLE.


BECAUSE THEY DID MOBILIZE THEIR ARMIES IN ORDER TO FIGHT.
BUT IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE OUR LUCK RETURNS.


I WOULD SAY IT SHOULDN'T TAKE MORE THAN THREE DAYS FOR GADHEVI TO MAKE UP HIS MIND TO FIGHT TO THE FINISH.
YES ...

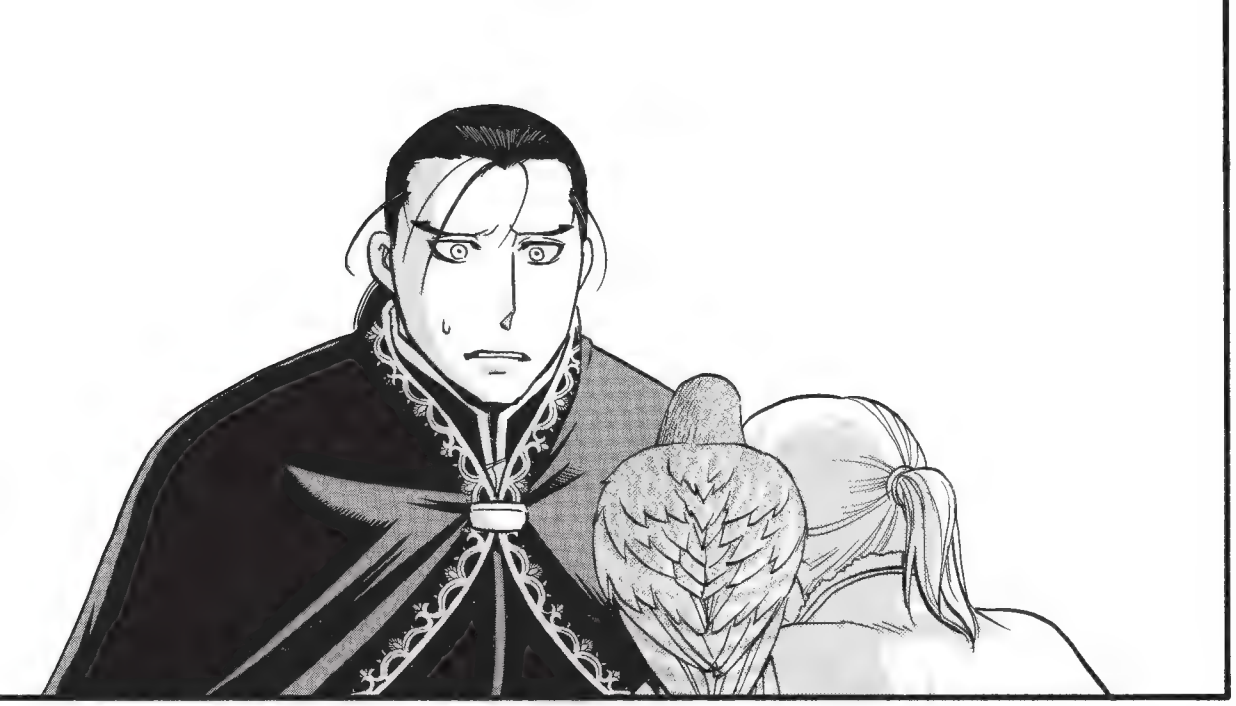




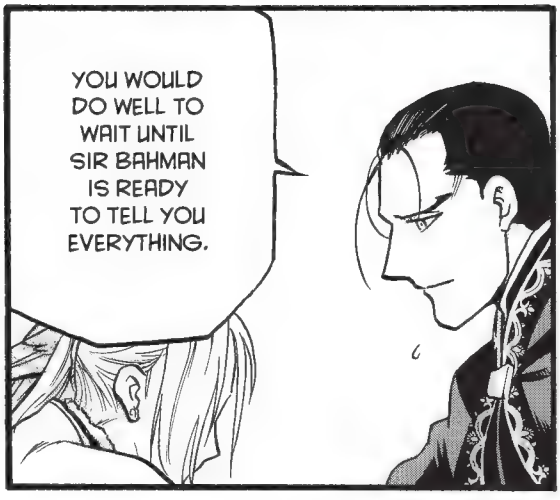


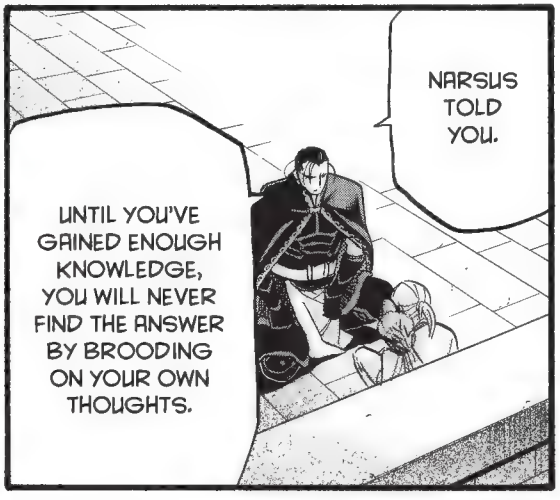
WINCE
YOUR HIGH-NESS!

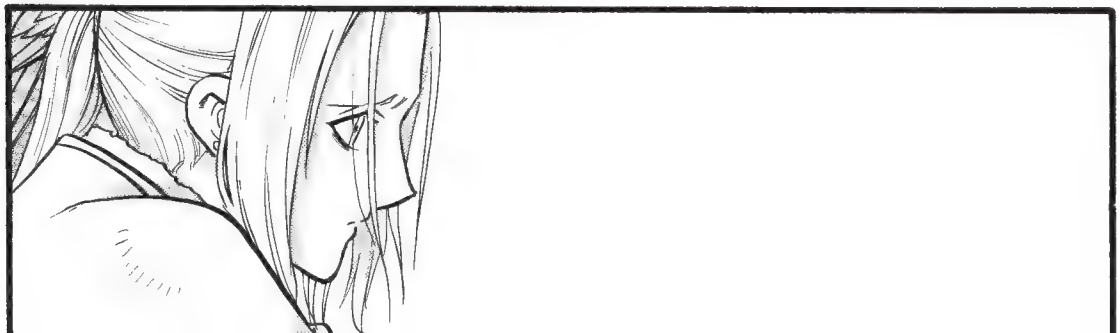
DOES IT STILL HURT?
IS THAT THE WOUND SILVERMASK GAVE YOU?
...IT DOES, A LITTLE.
DAR-YUN.
HERE YOU ARE.
IT WILL AG-GRAVATE YOUR INJURY.
THE WIND IS COLD OUT HERE.
AM I, REALLY ?
WHO
DAR-YUN.
WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK INSIDE THE FORTRESS ?

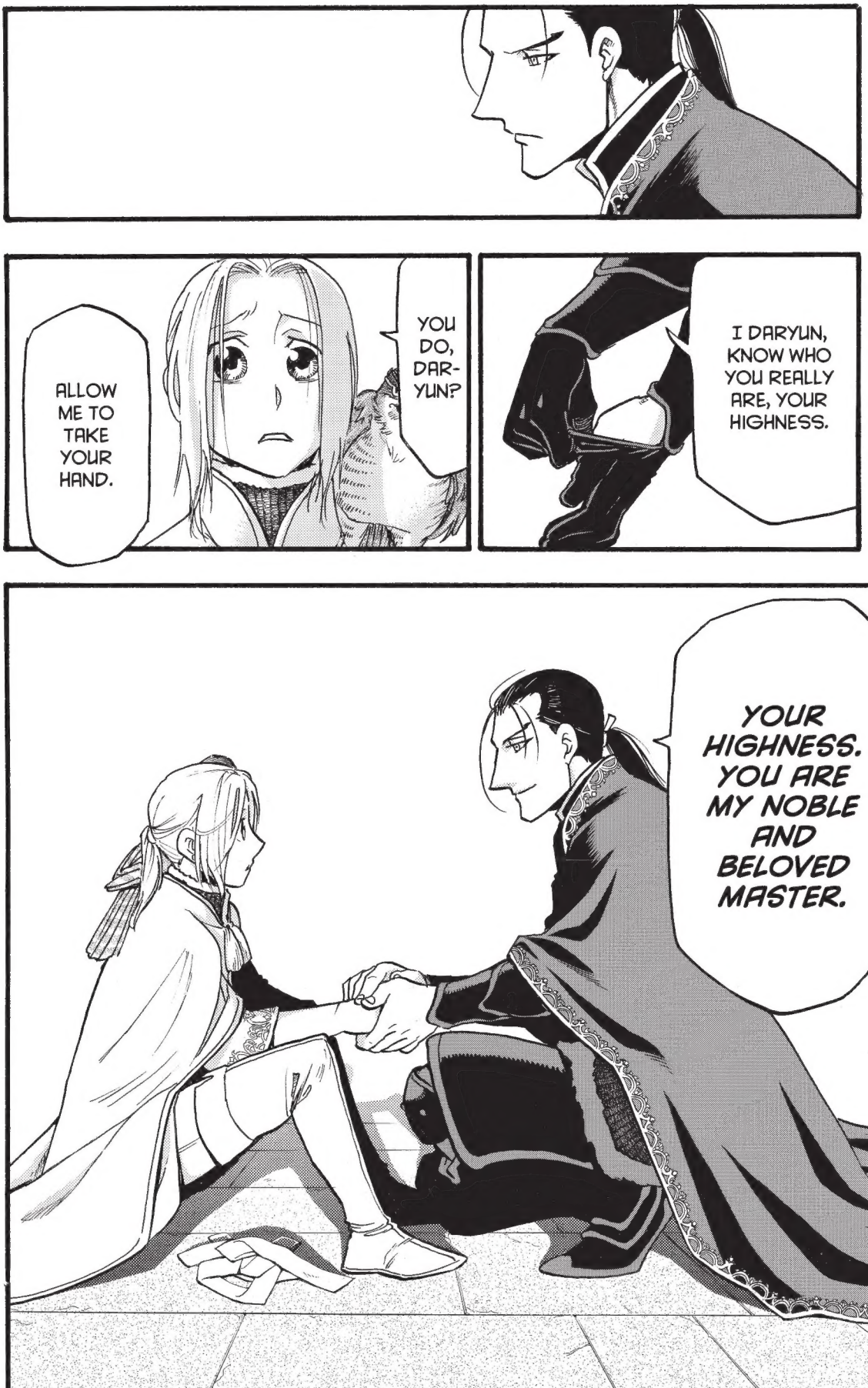


YOU MUSTN'T DWELL ON SUCH THINGS.

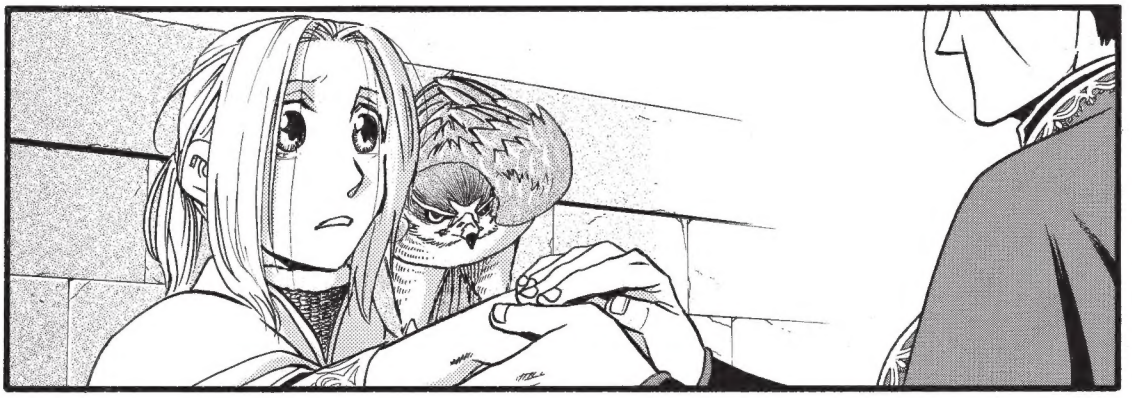

YOU WOULD DO WELL TO WAIT UNTIL SIR BAHMAN IS READY TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING.

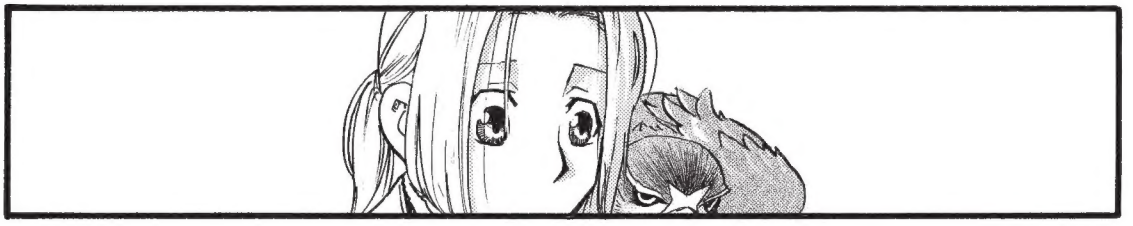

NARSUS TOLD YOU.
UNTIL YOU'VE GAINED ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE, YOU WILL NEVER FIND THE ANSWER BY BROODING ON YOUR OWN THOUGHTS.



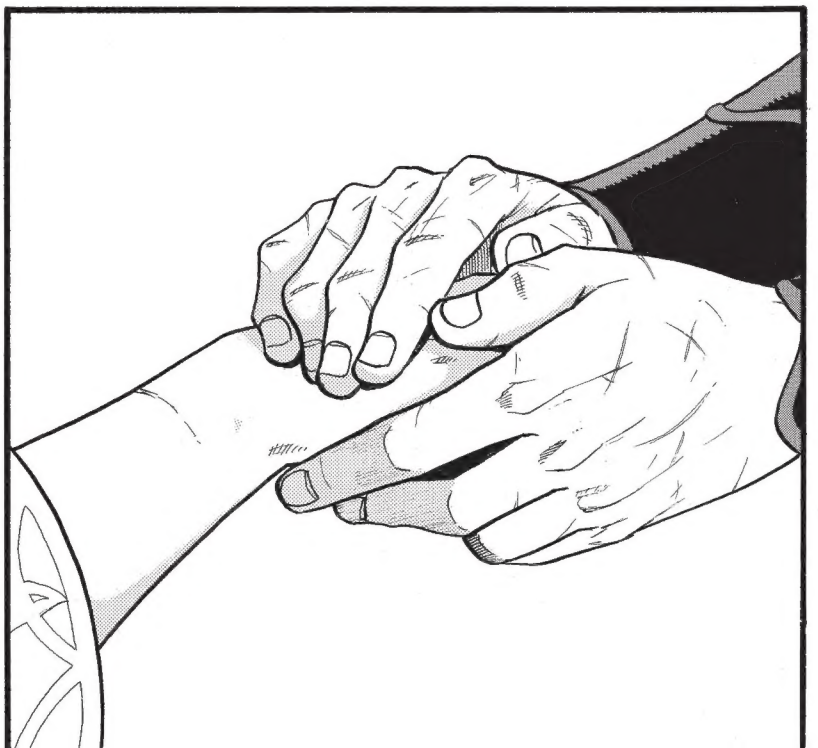

I DARYUN, KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE, YOUR HIGHNESS.
YOU DO, DAR-YUN?
ALLOW ME TO TAKE YOUR HAND.
YOUR HIGHNESS. YOU ARE MY NOBLE AND BELOVED MASTER.

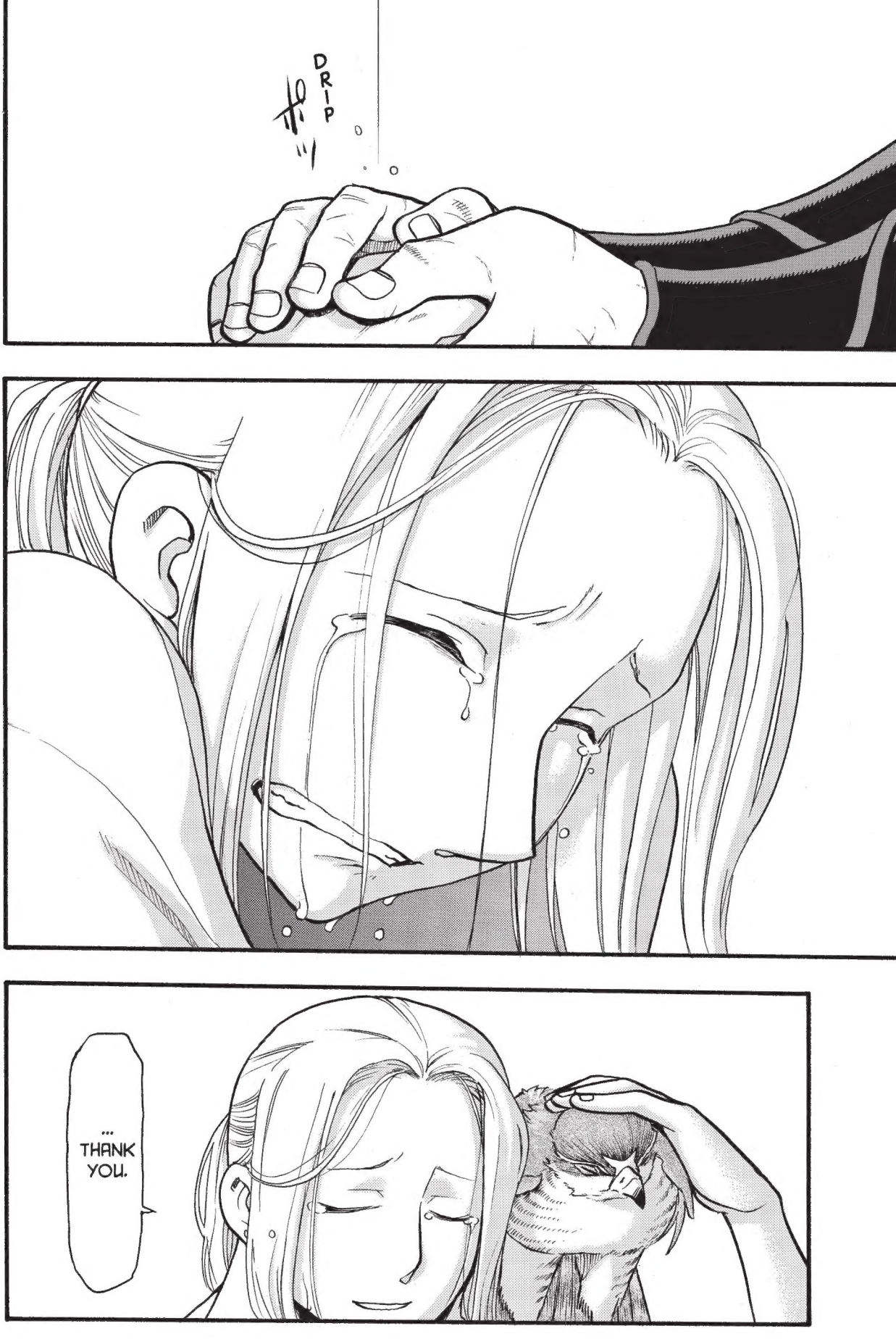
IS THAT NOT ENOUGH ?

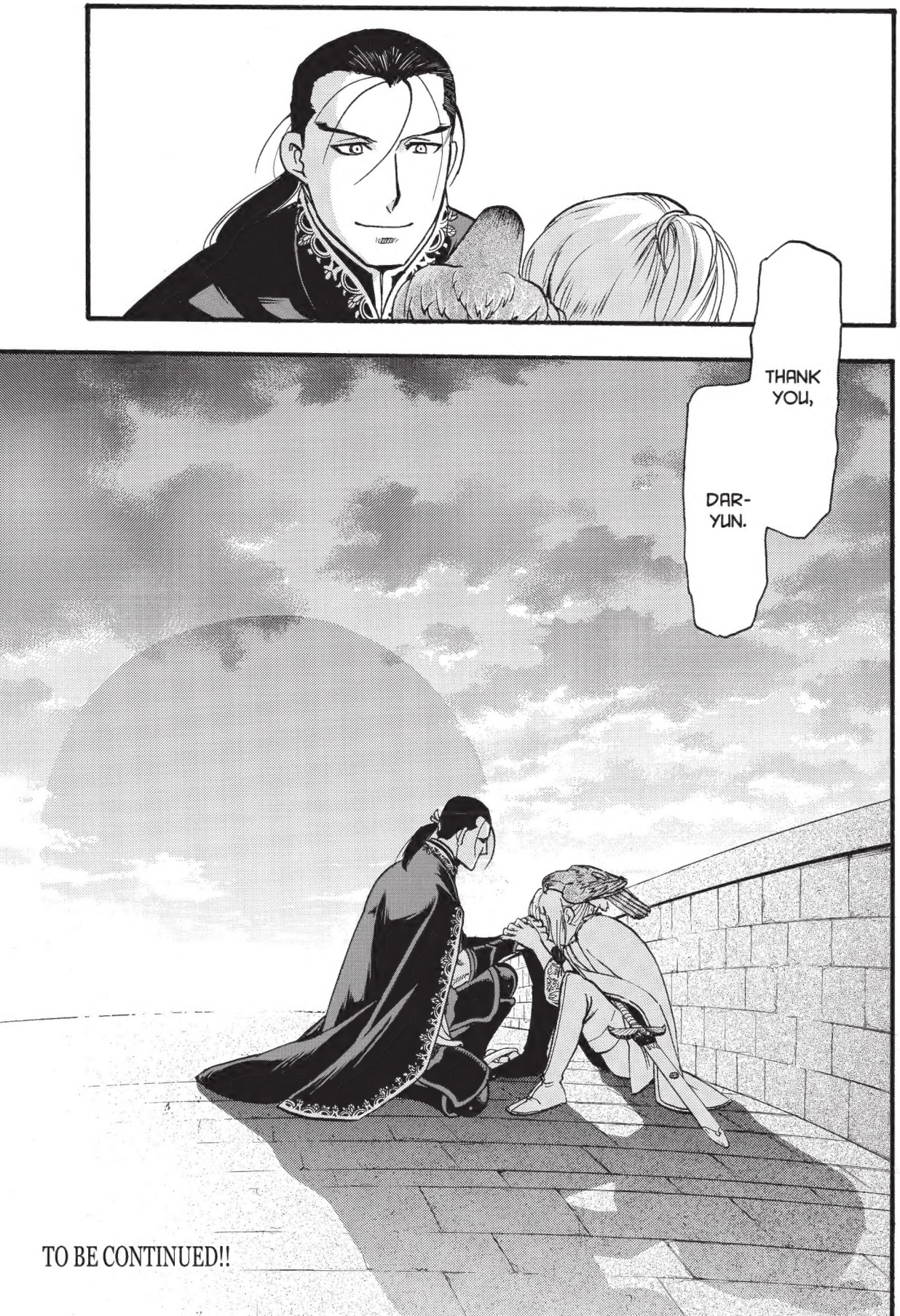




クー…
COO…




DRIP
...
THANK
YOU.



TO BE CONTINUED!!